

February 21, 2017

Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Dillon, Senator Somers, Representative Walker, Senator Osten, and Senator Formica, and members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Judith Moskal-Kanz and I am here to testify on HB 7027, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2019. I am a nurse practitioner who has been working for Hartford Public Schools' school-based health centers for the past 16 years. Our school-based health centers provide crucial services to students during their school day by achieving the following important goals:

- Increasing access to health care for all students, regardless of whether or not the student has health insurance.
- Ensuring school readiness for all students.
- Identifying and better understanding the health needs of students to promote student attendance and decrease absenteeism.
- Maintaining students' optimal health to assure that mental, physical, and dental health issues do not impede the learning process.
- Acting as a bridge to care, ensuring that every child has an identifiable source for primary care.
- Providing early detection of physical and mental problems in order to prevent/reduce the impact of acute and chronic conditions.
- Initiating treatment where appropriate, arranging follow-up appointments, and promoting compliance with treatment as detailed in protocol.
- Empowering children to assume responsibility for their own health and well-being.
- Maximizing the coordination of school health services.
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all students.

Research has demonstrated that school-based health centers represent cost-effective investments of public resources by reducing the number of emergency room visits. We treat students during the school day, eliminating the need to leave school for outside appointments and saving large numbers of educational hours that would otherwise be missed.

Please maintain funding to school-based health centers in our state so that young people can continue to thrive and stay in school. This is critical to their future.

Thank you for your help and your attention to these important services.

Judith Moskal-Kanz, Nurse Practitioner, HPS